NAQCC News

Jul 17, 2010	NAQCC Web Site	Issue #122

In this issue:

1. July Sprint.
2. June Challenge Results
3. General Club News
4. Web Site Tour
5. The NAQCC Elmer Project
6. CW Cartoon of the Month
7. Member Spotlight
8. News Items and Articles by Our Members

1. JULY SPRINT: Our regular monthly sprint is this Thursday, July 22 at 0030-0230Z. If you're new to ham radio and unfamiliar with Z or UTC time, that's Wednesday evening at 8:30 PM Eastern Daylight Time.

I wonder if we will continue our streak of 100+ log submissions for our July sprint. It would be wonderful if we do to continue showing the ham radio world that CW is still flourishing on the ham bands. Of course it also shows just how efficient CW is, even at QRP power levels near the low point of a sunspot cycle. Being right in the middle of summer, I'm thinking we may lose some participants to family oriented activities and vacations. However don't forget it's easy to set up a portable QRP/CW station on your vacation, and I'm sure the wife and kids will allow you a brief 2-hour break for some ham radio fun. So I'm looking forward to again working around 50 or so of you in the sprint.

More and more logs are coming in as GOLDEN LOGS each month, and that is a big help to me in cross-checking. One thing that still needs attention in many logs is the last item in a QSO, the point value. I note that many logs fail the GOLDEN LOG test because a member QSO is listed as a 1 point QSO instead of 2. A member will total the member QSO's correctly, but still in the log a few are listed as 1 point QSO's. A common cause of this is using GenLog, but not updating the GenLog data file which means GenLog doesn't recognize the newer members as members and puts a 1 instead of a 2 in the log. One member says he is not computer-literate enough to update the data file. That's OK. In that case just go over your log before submitting it, and replace any 1's with a 2 if it was a member QSO. He's done that, and I believe he had a GOLDEN LOG now.

You may think that sounds very picky, but the cross-checker (as all computer programs) requires an exact format for its input data.

Of course all of the above info can also be found on the Sprint General Rules page on the web site.

Our special First-Timer certificate that goes to the highest scoring participant who never before submitted a log for one of our sprints seems to be very popular. We've had many first-time entrants the past few sprints, and they are discovering that our sprints are extremely user-friendly to all participants, veteran or newcomer, because of the relaxed and friendly atmosphere. Virtually all participants operate at slow to moderate speeds, and are willing to take some extra time to help out a newcomer if needed.

If you are entering one of our sprints for the first time, we welcome you and hope you will be a regular participant from now on. Last month we welcomed another large group of new participants - 27!! Hopefully we'll have a flock this month as well.

Remember this is only a very brief (well...) overview of the coming sprint. Be sure to read and understand the full general sprint rules and any specific rules for this month's sprints here.

2. JUNE CHALLENGES RESULTS: Our challenge participation was down a bit this month. Our full month worked members challenge drew reports from 7 members with K3WWP winning the certificate for contacting the most different members during June with 56.

The FD challenge had reports from 4 portable and 3 home station members. NU7T and N8XMS (two of our most active members) tied for first in the portable category with 31 states while KU4A won for the home station category with 30.

As always, full challenge info and results can be found here.

3. GENERAL CLUB NEWS: - (From Mike KC2EGL) I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who donated to our prize 'vault'. Your generosity is greatly appreciated. I would also like to thank John K3WWP for asking me to take the task as prize manager. I did not think it would be as enjoyable as it has turned out to be. It gives me the chance to meet our members away from the radio (via email). It also gives me great satisfaction when someone finds out they are a winner of one of our prizes. One recent winner responded by saying "Lucky me" after I notified them. As you can see from our prize page we have a wide array of prizes for our members. Some take a bit of work to earn and some are drawn at random. Plus it gives me a reason to go visit John K3WWP more often. We live roughly 45 minutes away from each other along Pa Rte 28. We have more fun than the law allows when we figure out the format on how a prize is to be awarded. Yes John and I are responsible for the award process. We try to make earning our prizes as reasonable as possible as well as making it a challenge to earn our bigger prizes.

If you have any questions or something you think we would be interested in adding to our 'vault' please feel free to drop me a note. You can email me at **KC2EGLMJB@YAHOO.COM**. Thank you es 73 Mike KC2EGL NAQCC 1236 Prize Manager.

- Two of our prize giveaways ended at the end of June. Here are the winners:

My (K3WWP) donation of an ARRL Wire Antenna book went to the one who referred the most new members to the club the first half of 2010. Of the 632 new members we garnered in that time, 6 were the result of W9DAN's effort. That was the most of any of the many members who referred one or more hams to the club. I hope he enjoys the book which has been or will be

sent to him by our Prize Manager Mike KC2EGL.

We thought that offering a very nice prize of a 80, 40, or 20 meter dipole donated by KO0KY would increase interest in our Friendship Club award and attract some new FC members, but it didn't. So the drawing took place among the 7 wonderful members who had already earned their FC award. The winner was Don K3RLL. We're sure Don will make good use of his new antenna.

- Things are falling nicely into place for our October 6th anniversary event which will take place the week of October 11-17. Club President Tom WY3H has obtained all of our N#A special event calls, N1A, N2A.....N0A for the week.

Now we need volunteers to man those calls. You can operate as many hours or as few as a single hour during the week. It really just depends on how you work things out with your fellow ops in your call area. The only strict requirement is that we have all 10 calls on the air for our sprint that week. It would be fine if you could only operate the sprint without any additional operation if that suits you and your fellow ops.

Should there be any conflicts that can't be solved with your fellow ops, then the one who volunteered first gets the preference, so better sign up now just in case.

Here is a list of those who have volunteered so far:

N1A -
N2A -
N3A - WY3H, K3WWP, KC2EGL
N4A -
N5A - W5YDM, K5JYD
N6A -
N7A -
N8A -
N9A -
N0A -

Slim pickings, but there is still plenty of time to add your call to the list. Our 5th anniversary event last year was a tremendous success. Let's make the 6th anniversary even better! That, as everything we do at the NAQCC, will show the ham radio world that CW is not dead, but FLOURISHING. Remember in that regard that our voice is getting louder and louder as we approach the 5,000 member mark. If every member does his part, we'll be screaming at the top of our collective lungs.

- It is with deep sorrow and sympathy to his family that we report the following, "Hello, Greetings from Plymouth, England. My good friend Ron Cooper G0MSM, Member Nr 4357, recently became silent key. I thought that you would like to know this to amend your membership records. 72 / 73 de Roy G4PRL # 4665."

- We had hoped to have some news from Matt MW3YMY about the formation of the European Chapter of the NAQCC. However I was late in getting back to him on a list of proposals for the chapter and its sprint, and am still awaiting his responses to my comments. He has some great ideas for the chapter and the sprint, and I'm looking forward to putting them in action. We should have a lot of info about the chapter in the next newsletter in early August. Because of the close spacing of our July and August sprints, the next newsletter will be one of our double issues. It will be published August 7th.

- Remember Sonny and Cher's "The Beat Goes On". Well our hidden call sign feature in which we give away 100 NAQCC QSL cards from the Cheap QSL's company goes on also. Don't let the name fool you. These are NOT cheap looking QSL's. Cheap refers only to the price of the cards. Of course our hidden call winners get their cards free courtesy of the NAQCC, but even if you buy them, it's still a great bargain and a great way to proudly show off your NAQCC membership to those you work and QSL. Most of you know the details by now, but we always are signing up new members. So for them, the prize is won simply by reading each of our newsletters thoroughly. Hidden somewhere is the call sign of a member. If YOU find YOUR call and notify us before the next newsletter is published via **NAQCC33@WINDSTREAM.NET**, our Prize Manager Mike KC2EGL will make the arrangements with you to get your free QSL's. Deadline for this issue is August 6. The hidden call is in a very out of context place and consists of a mix of upper and lower case letters to distinguish it from other callsigns which are always all upper case letters.

4. WEB SITE TOUR: - This month it's what I consider a really great feature of the web site, our Pictures section. It's wonderful to be able to put a face to those dits and dahs coming out of your speaker or headphones. Using this section, you can do that with around 200 club members.

Each month we feature one or two members with a picture of them and/or their shack. Included is a short hc027 biography of the member(s). It's almost exactly like what Paul is doing with the featured member section of our newsletters, except we allow more pictures here, and a longer biography if that is the member's desire.

In the Gallery, you'll find head shots of our members. 198 of them at last count. It's interesting to get a mental picture of someone when you work them, and then find out you either were pretty close or way off when you see what they actually look like.

The Officers page has an extensive biography of those of our club officers who have chosen to send us the info.

If you haven't sent anything for this section yet, we hope you will at least consider sending a picture for the Gallery. You can send any size picture with your face in it and we will crop it to size. If you want the picture to look good, the face portion should be at least 120x120 pixels. A large image will reduce and maintain good quality, but a smaller image blown up will often become fuzzy and blurred depending on how small it was to begin with. Just send a .jpg image via email and we'll do the rest. Include your call AND membership number in the body of the email.

Take a look at our pictures here.

5. THE NAQCC ELMER PROJECT:

The Elmer project is co-ordinated by Karl N3IJR (L) and Ron K5DUZ. If you are interested in helping out or need help with any CW and/or QRP matters contact:
K5DUZ - **NAQCCSKED@FLASH.NET**
N3IJR - pix, email, n3ijr (1K)

Elmer's Tip: One of the best ways to succeed with QRP is to be as close as possible to perfect

in your sending CW and using procedure signals. It is so much easier to copy a weak CW signal if the CW sounds like computer-sent CW like that of W1AW. Also using standard procedures in a QSO allows the person you are working to anticipate and/or fill in when QSB takes your signal down into the noise. For example if you make it a point to always send things in a certain order like RST, then QTH, then your Name, your contact will be able to more easily figure out what is coming should QSB, QRM, and/or QRN interfere. One more example is using AR and SK correctly to indicate end of transmission or end of QSO. That's only a brief overview. Many more examples of good operating practices can be found in the Elmer Project page of the web site and on K3WWP's Web Site

QRS Net Report:

Date(UTC)	NCS	Check-ins
6/28/10	WY3H	3 - WY3H, K3WWP, K1IEE
7/5/10	WY3H/K3WWP	5 - WY3H, K3WWP, K1IEE, WM4X, K9EYT
7/12/10	K3WWP	3 - K3WWP, K1IEE, KC9MTP

As you see from the report, we are still looking for someone to step forward and serve as NCS (Net Control Station). Overworked Tom and John need some help in this regard. We don't want to have to discontinue the net, since (despite the low number of check-ins) it was something our members really wanted for the club. Being NCS does not require any special skills or knowledge of regular net type operations. We're not a formal net, just a gathering place for some slow speed code practice on the air under real propagation conditions. Computer practice programs are wonderful, but there's no match for actual practice on the air with its many variables such as QSB, QRN, QRM, etc.

The NAQCC QRS Net convenes each Monday at 0130Z when Standard time is in effect and 0030Z during Daylight savings time (Sunday evening at 8:30PM here in the USA Eastern time zone). From April through October, the frequency is 7118 kHz and from November through March it's 3575 kHz. Everyone is invited to check in for some hands-on CW teaching and learning. QRO is permitted for this one NAQCC activity since learning CW is so important and it may be difficult for newcomers to copy weaker signals amidst QRM or QRN. NCS until we find a replacement is Tom WY3H using the club call of N3AQC.

See Elmer Project on the web site for a summary of net procedure and much more info on other matters to help those who may need it.

6. CW CARTOON OF THE MONTH:

Let's take a comedy and/or nostalgia break now courtesy of Dick Sylvan W9CBT. Dick has been a long-time QRP/CW operator. One of his many talents is being a cartoon artist, and he is supplying a cartoon each month for the newsletter. The NAQCC is very honored to be one of just two organizations to feature Dick's cartoons. In addition to our newsletter, Dick's cartoons appear monthly in The K9YA Telegraph, an on-line only Ham Radio E-zine where he is the staff cartoonist. Dick has also authored a book entitled "Hi Hi - A Collection of Ham Radio Cartoons" available via his web site. A new cartoon will be appearing in each of our even-numbered newsletters.

7. MEMBER SPOTLIGHT:

This section is managed by Paul N8XMS and any questions about it should go to PAUL142857@GMAIL.COM. Paul selects members at random and asks them if they would like to be featured in the Member Spotlight in the newsletter.

Newt White K0NWT #4071

I am a flavor chemist for a major soft drink company and some other interests include cooking and operating my Big Green Egg as a barbecue grill and meat smoker. I am happily married for 30 plus years and I am lucky to be a father to three great (grownup) kids. I am looking forward to retirement and even more radio time.

I was first licensed in 2009 with the no code Technician license and upgraded to General three months later. I am also a member of the ARRL, the Atlanta Radio Club, North GA QRP, Flying Pigs, ARCI, Fists,and SKCC among other fine groups.

I began learning CW late in 2009 and enjoy the combination of QRP and CW. My favorite key is a cootie or side swiper. I am also an avid kit collector and am finally learning how to melt solder and I am currently building the BitX20A QRP SSB rig. I also am an NCS for the NoGAQRP SSB net every week on 80M.

My current hardware includes an FT 857D, an FT 450/AT, and most recently a Flex 5000 SDR. I usually run 5W on CW and 10 or less on SSB. I use a G5RV, Hustler 5BTV, and a 10M ham stick dipole and I like to set up an 80M inverted V for local TX. My first antenna was a home brew coat hanger 2M built on an SO239.

In 2010, I plan to attend the Dayton event and the ARCI FDIM. I hope to make more friends and find even more good QRP kits there. I also am studying for the Amateur Extra license and plan to take the test by year's end.

We have an active ham community in the Atlanta area, and I am lucky to have several clubs and many experienced Elmers at close hand so I may continue to learn and enjoy this wonderful hobby.

I appreciate this opportunity to meet you and hope we can connect on the bands this year.

73,
Newt
K0NWT
NAQCC #4071

Editors Note: Since there is a significant delay between the submission and actual publication

of a spotlight, Newt refers to the Dayton Hamvention and FDIM as part of his future plans. Hopefully he had a great time.

8. NEWS ITEMS AND ARTICLES BY OUR MEMBERS:

This section is a forum for you to tell other members what you've been up to on the ham bands or to submit an article dealing with some aspect of CW and QRP operation or equipment. Send your news items and articles to our news editor Paul KD2MX at **KD2MX@ARRL.NET**. For your convenience any links in this section will open in a new browser window so you can come immediately back here to the newsletter just by closing that extra window.

(disclaimer) Any views expressed here are those of the member submitting them, and may not be in agreement with those of the NAQCC.

- **From John K3WWP #0002** - My mW QSO streak that started with our NAQCC May Challenge still continues. I'm finding it a bit harder to get my daily QSO using 930 mW than with 5 W, but I've yet to miss a day since I began on May 1st. Hopefully the streak will hit 100 days just a couple days after my regular main streak reaches the 16 year mark on August 4th. Yes, as all NAQCC members already know, I'm sure, QRP and even QRPp do work and work well with the super-efficient mode of CW - NO MATTER the stage of the sunspot cycle or the size of your antenna.

- **From Bob VE1RSM #2974 -** I will be operating from Whitehorse, Yukon from now until August 20th. I have recently been on 20-meter CW. My station is modest: a FT857D with a G5RV and AT200 Pro Tuner.

I worked a US station who was runnng only one watt so I can hear QRP stations. Conditions are not always the best and my best band for contacts has been 20 meters. I operate from around 14005 Mhz to 14020 Mhz but I try to hang out around 14010 Mhz if it is available. I am not sure how much of a signal I would have running QRP but am willing to try. The lowest I can go is five watts.

If you are a member and wish to confirm your contact just include your number and I will respond with mine. I may even just start including my number in my reports.

So if you are looking for a contact in VY1 land, listen for me around 0100 UTC. However, some evenings I have not made many contacts before 0300 due to the band not being open.

- **From Paul N8XMS #675 -** I spent a few hours on Field Day running a solo 1B-Battery operation from my backyard. I used my little Elecraft KX1 with a 40-ft wire tossed up into a tree, and three 16-ft counterpoise wires laid out on the ground. With about 2.5 watts, I had 71 QSOs on 20 and 40 meters. I worked 31 states, 2 Canadian provinces, and a total of 36 ARRL sections. Two highlights were working W1AW and W9JP. W9JP is the club call for the Indianapolis Radio Club, which claims to be the oldest continuously meeting club in the United Sates. It was founded in 1914! By the way, notice the fine looking head gear in the picture!

Ham radio has taken a back seat here for the last few days with the birth of our first grandchild, a beautiful little girl. What does this have to do with the NAQCC? Well first, at 6 lbs 13 oz she is definitely QRP, and second, this grandpa is going to do everything possible to get her first words to come out in Morse Code! Does anyone know where I can get one of those "spin and say" toys that outputs CW? :-)

- **From Terry KE5YUM #3102 -** I put my Genesis G5 transmitter on the air for the first time the other night and qualified for two more Miles per Watt awards. The first QSO was with K0ZK in Maine (1500 miles) and the second was with N2ESE (1268 miles). My antenna is a 20-meter inverted-V at 30 feet. I look forward to using the transmitter in upcoming sprints on 14.060.

The publication of our next newsletter will be announced via email to all members for whom we have a valid email address unless they specifically have unsubscribed from the email.

Unless otherwise credited, all items are written by K3WWP.

If you came directly to this newsletter, we invite you now to browse the NAQCC Web Site.